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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ comprising:
 - an interface that provides outside entities connection to the proprietary information utility ~~computing system~~;
 - a physical storage device that stores a repository that contains the repository containing proprietary information, wherein the repository is compartmentalized by user identity and entitlement, so that a first category of proprietary information is within private domains available to only a single user and a second category of proprietary information is within domains to which multiple users may be granted use in response to paying a subscription fee to use particular proprietary information within the second category of proprietary information;
 - application services;
 - a security system, that limits access of each user connecting to the proprietary information utility computing system to proprietary information to which each user is entitled, the proprietary information to which each user is entitled being accessed through use of the application services; and
 - a billing system for tracking usage by users of the proprietary information utility computing system for billing purposes;

wherein the first category of proprietary information comprises works of authorship in which the single user has proprietary rights.

2. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the second category of proprietary information includes decision support software.

3. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the application services include services to perform at least one of the following activities related to patents:

- help identify patentable ideas;
- create patent disclosures;
- manage pending patents;
- manage research logs; and,
- research existing patents.

4. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the application services include at least one of the services listed below:

- decision support software;
- software for troubleshooting products;
- system configuration services;
- diagnostic services;

planning services;
selection services;
authoring tools that help authors generate appropriate software models;
learning services for data-mining and the ongoing evolution of models;
business intelligence services;
version management services;
presentation services;
brokering services;
stock selection services;
investment portfolio troubleshooting services;
investment portfolio selection services;
services to troubleshoot devices;
medical diagnosis services;
services that predict failure and behavior;
purchasing decision services;
consulting services;
skills gap analysis services;
translation services for translating decision support models from one
underlying technology to another;
enterprise resource planning services; and,
customer relationship management services.

5. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the first category of proprietary information contains health records and the application services include services to provide services for supporting healthcare and patients, without revealing private information. (Currently Amended)

6. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the second category of proprietary information includes proprietary information within at least one of the areas listed below:
decision support models; and
models associated with troubleshooting products.

7. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility computing system as in claim 1 wherein the second category of proprietary information includes decision support models utilizing at least one of the technologies listed below:

Bayesian networks;
neural networks;
case-based systems;
model-based systems;
rule-based systems;
fuzzy systems;
decision trees;

genetic algorithms;
Monte Carlo Markov chains;
clustering algorithms;
Monte Carlo optimization;
simulated annealing;
pattern matching;
influence diagrams;
online analytical processing;
collaborative filtering;
linear programming;
machine learning; and,
time series.

8. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the interface allows users to connect to the proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ using at least one of the following deployment channels:

wireless network;
cellular phones;
internet sites;
applications embedded in appliances;
applications embedded in devices;

applications embedded in vehicle communication and information systems;

applications embedded in intelligent agents; and,

applications embedded in memory modules.

9. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the application services include services to support the creation, maintenance, and deployment of decision support models, in at least one of the following areas:

data-mining;

usage reports;

business intelligence reports;

adaptive learning and refining of models;

authoring wizards particular to specific horizontal and vertical industries;

and,

quality benchmarks of models.

10. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 additionally comprising:

an application service registry that manages dynamic registration, access, use, and disposal of the application services.

11. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 additionally comprising:

a proprietary information broker that maps semi-structured proprietary information requests to a most appropriate proprietary information model and application services that will operate on the most appropriate proprietary information model.

12. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the security system provides non-repudiation services in support of billing and reporting

13. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the security system provides privacy for all information transmitted outside of the proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~, allowing proprietary services to make use of proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ without revealing anything about users of the proprietary services and without revealing contents of data moving between services.

14. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the billing system provides revenue to be generated using at least one of the following pricing schemes:

pay-per-use micro-transactions;

vendor-visible service-based pricing;

hybrid flows;

subscription-based pricing; and,

price bundling.

15. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 additionally comprising:

a scaleable computing engine that runs services across many pieces of information.

16. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 additionally comprising:

a computing engine, the computing engine being used to translate information from an author into a utility-native proprietary information format that can be used by at least a subset of application services within the proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~.

17. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 wherein the billing system calculates royalty payments due to authors when proprietary information of the authors is used by the application services within the proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~.

18. (Currently Amended) A proprietary information utility ~~computing machine~~ as in claim 1 additionally comprising an application service registry that manages dynamic registration, access, use, and disposal of the application services, the application service registry providing a service catalog, a discovery mechanism, and a brokering interface that links with the proprietary information broker and the security system to provide a custom view of available application services, based on entitlement and visibility.

19. (Currently Amended) A method implemented by a computing machine comprising the following steps:

providing outside entities connection to a proprietary information utility;

storing proprietary information within a repository, wherein the repository is compartmentalized by user identity and entitlement so that a first category of proprietary information is within private domains available to only a single user and a second category of proprietary information is within domains to which multiple users may be granted use in response to paying a subscription fee to use particular proprietary information within the second category of proprietary information, and wherein the first category of proprietary information comprises works of authorship in which the single user has proprietary rights;

limiting access of each user connecting to the proprietary information utility to proprietary information to which each user is entitled, the proprietary information to which each user is entitled being accessed through use of

application services operating within the proprietary information utility,
wherein multiple users can be granted access to the same proprietary
information;

tracking usage of users of the proprietary information utility; and,
creating bills based on the tracked usage.

20. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 19 additionally
comprising the following:

managing dynamic registration, access, use, and disposal of the
application services.

21. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 19 additionally
comprising the following:

mapping semi-structured proprietary information requests to a most
appropriate proprietary information model and application services that will
operate on the most appropriate proprietary information model.

22. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 19 wherein limiting
access of each user connecting to the proprietary information utility to
proprietary information to which each user is entitled includes providing non-
repudiation services in support of billing and reporting

23. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 19 wherein limiting access of each user connecting to the proprietary information utility to proprietary information to which each user is entitled includes providing privacy for all information transmitted outside of the proprietary information utility, allowing proprietary services to make use of proprietary information utility without revealing anything about users of the proprietary services and without revealing contents of data moving between services.

24. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 19 wherein tracking usage of users of the proprietary information utility for billing purposes includes providing revenue to be generated using at least one of the following pricing schemes:

- pay-per-use micro-transactions;
- vendor-visible service-based pricing;
- hybrid flows;
- subscription-based pricing; and,
- price bundling.

25. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 19 additionally comprising the following:

- translating information from an author into a utility-native proprietary information format that can be used by a least a subset of application services within the proprietary information utility.

26. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 25 wherein tracking usage of users of the proprietary information utility for billing purposes includes calculating royalty payments due to authors when proprietary information of the authors is used by the application services within the proprietary information utility.

27. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 19 additionally comprising the following: providing a service catalog, a discovery mechanism to provide a custom view of available application services, based on entitlement and visibility.

28 - 31. (Canceled)